



**Indiana-Michigan
Mennonite
Conference**

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Mennonite Church USA

Gospel Evangel

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Ordinary Time

“Breathe and be filled”

by Noël King

Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”—John 20:21-23 (NRSV)

In our end is our beginning

Gail Terry

First Mennonite of Fort Wayne (Ind.)

AFTER SPENDING TIME reading and meditating on John 20:21-23, **Gail Terry** of First Mennonite of Fort Wayne (Ind.) said, “The first thing that stood out for me was ‘Peace be with you,’ and then that we find peace through the Holy Spirit.”

“When you look at verse 23—‘If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven, and if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven,’” she continued, “it’s through the Holy Spirit that we as humans are able to forgive the grievances and hurts and things that are inflicted upon us. Then we are comforted by the Holy Spirit.”

She added, “Most sermons I have heard on this pas-

From the editor

In this year’s newsletters, we’ve been seeking to connect the seasons of the church year with stories of how the Spirit is working in the lives of people across our conference.

This is the first of two issues occurring during **Ordinary Time**, which falls between Christmas and Lent and between Easter and Advent. In Latin, Ordinary Time is called *Tempus Per Annum*, or “time throughout the year.”

The particular focus for this issue—within the context of Ordinary Time—is the theme from the Mennonite Church USA convention held in June/July: “Breathe and be filled” (John 20:21-22). At a retreat of communications/development staff of Mennonite agencies and organizations last fall, several of us committed to use this theme in the third quarter as of way of continuing to explore this text. I’ve chosen to add verse 23; it intrigues me that forgiveness is the first action Jesus names after giving his disciples the Holy Spirit. I hope you’ll enjoy these glimpses of our Spirit-breathing God at work in the ordinary days of our ordinary lives.—Annette Brill Bergstresser, editor

sage encourage us to carry on the work of Jesus. I think in taking that a step further, we are supposed to share the good news and get the message out there, and part of that message is in forgiveness.”

As she contemplates what this passage calls her to do in her own life, Gail said, “How can we expect God to forgive us if we are not able to forgive others?”

Not long ago, she said, life gave her ample opportunity to practice: “I recently

went through a divorce, and a lot of people didn’t feel like I was going to be able to forgive this person ... but it’s through the Holy Spirit that I was able to do that. Right now I can honestly say that I have no hard feelings towards him.”

Throughout that time, Gail
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First Mennonite of Fort Wayne: Pastor Peter Janzen and member Gail Terry at a fellowship meal for a member who was moving away. (Photo provided)

the Word among us

This year, each issue of *Gospel Evangel* is featuring people sharing about Bible texts that have made a difference in their lives.

Jesus' commandments set focus for prison chaplain

by Noël King

"IT'S TIME."

Tom Tippet's wife, Teresa, leaned over to give him this cryptic message one Sunday morning as they sat listening to the pastor's sermon.

"I looked at her and said, 'Time for what? I mean, we're in the middle of church here,'" remembers Tom. "And she said, 'It's time to give your notice at work.'"

Just four months shy of logging 30 years at his job in the business world, Tom said, "I knew two things. I knew, number one, that God was telling me it's time to leave and get this ministry going, and number two, that He was telling me through my wife that she was okay with what we were doing."

"That was 12 years ago," added Tom, "and the Lord has absolutely blessed us since then."

The ministry that God was calling Tom to move into more fully that day is now known as No Fence Too High Ministries, Inc., a nonprofit, Christian-based prison and jail ministry that enables inmates to talk to a counselor not connected to the prison system.

A big reason the organization exists today is because of Tom's deep commitment to living out **Matthew 22:37-39**,

a key Scripture he said is often on his mind: **"Jesus replied, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment, and the second is 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"**

"I think that basically is the way I try to live," he elaborated. "I meet with a lot of people who share their crimes with me, and if I didn't understand God's love, it would be pretty hard for me to sit and listen to and care about them. If I say I'm going to love God and He tells me I am to love my neighbor, then I better care about these people, and I better be willing to do whatever I can to help their situation."

He clarified that he does not go into the prison system to try to get people out: "That is not what I am there for. I am there to try to help them deal with their daily life being incarcerated."

A daily life that is often difficult, he said. When asked about the prison depiction in *The Shawshank Redemption*, Tom said prisoners tell him the movie comes closer than any other to showing what prison life is truly like: "When they talk about the mind-numbing boredom, that's true. It's like *Groundhog Day* for a prisoner; every day you get up, it's the same thing."

Tom explained that when he began his own ministry, "I just wanted to be a person who could go in and say, 'Look, I'm not a state employee. I'm not connected to the system in any way. I am just a Christian volunteer who you can come and talk to.'"

At the Michigan state prisons and Emmet County jails where Tom does much of his ministry, he not only provides one-on-one Christian counseling for inmates but also conducts group Bible studies that are based on the Biblical Counseling Foundation Self-Confrontation material that he himself found so helpful as a new Christian in the late 1980s.

What distinguishes his ministry from many other organizations, Tom said, is his commitment to following up with inmates: "They know that every week, unless there's bad weather or something, I'm going to be there."

Currently a member and elder at Stutsmanville Chapel in Harbor Springs, Mich., Tom also is licensed as a minister by IN-MI Conference.

He traces his path into prison ministry back to 1992 when a friend called and asked him if he would like to accompany him to a Walk to Emmaus reunion event where there were going to be "a cop and an ex-con talking about some prison ministry."

The sheriff and ex-offender who presented at the event turned out to be part of Kairos Prison Ministry, a ministry in which Tom soon began participating as well. "Kairos," meaning "God's special time," eventually branched off in Michigan to become Keryx, or "the herald," referring to a person in ancient times sent by his master to proclaim in public the *(continued on p. 3)*



Tom Tippet of No Fence Too High Ministries, Inc., and Stutsmanville Chapel, Harbor Springs, Mich. (Photo provided)



Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference is a community of 79 congregations in Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee, gathering together for mutual encouragement in kingdom mission and inspiration to joyfully follow Jesus.

Office: 212 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526

Phone: 574 534-4006 or 800 288-8486

Web site: im.mennonite.net

Editor: Annette Brill Bergstresser (annette@im.mennonite.net)

All glory and honor go to God for any way that this issue extends God's kingdom.

Communication Advisory Committee: Tyler Hartford, chair, Goshen, Ind.; Bill Beck, Sturgis, Mich.; Zulma Prieto, Goshen; Heidi King, staff; Charlotte Long, staff; Annette Brill Bergstresser, staff

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"Breathe and be filled" ... (continued from p. 1)

said, her church community responded to her with a gracious spirit of their own: "First Mennonite is a very loving and forgiving congregation; I have experienced that firsthand."

"When I was going through the separation and the whole process, I kind of pulled back," she explained. "I didn't want to be around people. But my congregation just let me know that they cared about me and they were there to support me."

Gail, who has called First Mennonite "home" for many years, was a young Southern Baptist girl when she was first introduced to the Mennonite community.

"I was 10 years old, and I lived across the street from a lady who attended the Mennonite church," she remembers. "She would go through the neighborhood and gather up all us young girls and take us to Girls Club, and then she would encourage us to come back for Vacation Bible School."

After attending the church until her teenage years, Gail said she "kind of drifted away" and eventually moved out of the area. When she was an adult in the mid-1980s, however, life events brought her back to her childhood neighborhood, and the thread continued.

"I got a flyer in the mail," she recalls, "and they were offering some things at the church, and one of them was an introduction to computers—a little workshop—and I thought, 'You know, that sounds interesting.'"

After not having been to the church in 20 years, Gail signed up for the class. And the woman who had invited her to church when she was a child—Lorene Simerman—was still part of the congregation, and remembered her.

"I went to the church thinking, 'I'm not going to know anybody,' but there she was, and she remembered me. I was blown away," Gail marveled.

Since then, Gail has served on every committee at First Mennonite, taught every Sunday school class at every level, and also served as a lay minister for outreach for three years.

And she was able to repay Lorene, who recently passed away, when Lorene was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. When Lorene's son asked the congregation for help in taking care of her, Gail—who does in-home health care—stepped up to the plate: "I said, 'She's done a lot for me; this is the least I can do.'"

For several years, Gail helped Lorene on weekends and took her to church every Sunday. "It had a big impact on me," she said, "and I'm sure it had a big impact on her family as well."

"I went to the church thinking, 'I'm not going to know anybody,' but there she was, and she remembered me."

Today, Gail continues transforming endings into beginnings as she nears the finish line of a double major in surgical tech and medical assisting at Harrison College. Although she said it has been "a little overwhelming at times," her faith and reliance on Scripture passages such as John 20 continue to inspire and support her.

"This morning on my way to school to take my finals, I just said a prayer," she said. "I asked for God to be in my head and in my memories and in the words on the tests. I asked that He would be in it, and I expect Him to be in each step of my progress as I go through school."

And through a life guided by the same Spirit who breathed on the disciples.

Forgiveness in community

Karen Kingsley

Fellowship of Hope, Elkhart, Ind.

"I REALLY LOVE WORKING THROUGH THE SCRIPTURE," said Karen Kingsley of Fellowship of Hope in Elkhart, Ind. "I enjoy wrestling with the passages."

As she meditated recently on John 20:21-23, she began her inquiry by looking beyond those three verses.

"I always like to look at the context of a passage," she explained, "and what I noted is that the words 'Peace be with you' were given to fearful disciples who had locked themselves in the room."

"When Jesus breathed on them the Spirit, he gave them double assurance," she continued, "because not only did he say, 'Peace be with you,' but he also breathed into them the very Spirit that would enable them to be peaceful. He empowered them."

Karen said she once took a graduate class in which the students were encouraged to make a sentence of what they had read, and that hers for this passage would be, **"God bestows peace and sends me with the blessing of God's Spirit to be forgiving."**

Looking further at forgiveness, Karen said, "It seems like a very primary goal or part of the sending in evangelism is forgiveness. Forgiveness is who Jesus is, and when I look at this chapter, it's written in the context of the resurrection. The resurrection to me is the completion of Jesus' forgiveness of sin. He had to die, but the resurrection shows that it's done, it's over, and it's new."

"The only way to become a new person or spiritual being in the fullness of God's character is through the forgiveness of our sins, which allows us then to be forgiving of others," she added. "We can only experience God's forgiveness through each other. That was another (continued on p. 4)

the Word among us ... (continued from p. 2)

master's message that was not to be changed.

Tom continues to work with Keryx today as well as with his own ministry, where he said he frequently sees the amazing ability of God's love to change inmates' lives and hearts: "I know guys who are lifers in prison

and they can honestly—with a smile on their face—say, 'You know what? If God wants me to die in this place, I'll die in this place because I'm living for Him.'"

He concluded, "That just blows my mind, but that's the power of our God."

—Noël King is a freelance writer from Scottsville, Va.



(above, left) During a workday in November 2008, a crew of people from Church Without Walls and Fellowship of Hope and some of FoH's neighbors install siding on the addition. (above, right) Jonathan Fridley of FoH and neighbor David Fayne enjoy a break from their work. (Photos provided by Verlin Miller)



Fellowship of Hope celebrates expansion of building

This last June, the Fellowship of Hope (FoH) congregation in Elkhart, Ind., held an open house to celebrate an addition to their building that they hope will help them further live out their vision of hospitality.

The expansion grew out of the congregation's desire to make their building more handicap accessible, to have a more open and inviting entryway, and to update the building's exterior. The project, which has taken about two years to complete, was funded in part by a capital grant from IN-MI Conference, recommended by the Stewardship and Finance Commission and approved by the former Executive Committee in December 2007.

"When we bought the building in 1981, we did interior renovation, but very little on the outside," recalled Verlin Miller, treasurer and Stewardship Circle convenor for the congregation. The current addition involved putting the church office on the

main floor, adding an elevator, moving the entryway steps inside, and installing a new roof and new siding.

Verlin worked with an architect to do the design work. The congregation—with the assistance of The Hope Builders Group, a construction company owned by FoH members Jeff and Lois Hoover—hired out the labor for the main structure and contributed their own construction gifts for miscellaneous carpentry work, interior trim work, painting and siding.

"We worked just about every Saturday in the summer and fall for two years," Verlin said. "We also had some workdays where we invited people from Church Without Walls and men from the neighborhood to help."

"We're looking forward to working on finishing decorating details in the next month," he added.

—Annette Brill Bergstresser

"Breathe and be filled" ... (continued from p. 3)

profound thought that came to me, that our forgiveness of others is integral to our relationship with God and to their experience of Him."

This passage relates to Karen's life in a number of ways. Since August, she and her husband, Karl, have been providing a home for a homeless man and woman.

Although she acknowledged some fears about the possible risks of housing initial strangers, she said that she felt "very much at peace" about their decision and that she has been blessed by the couple's presence in unexpected ways.

While the two arrived on her doorstep when Karen was particularly busy with other life events—such as helping her father move off his farm—the pair ended up being extraordinarily helpful to Karen in the midst of her responsibilities. She said, "I just felt like—well, I don't know what I would have done without them."

With Karen's background as a mental health case manager for 11 years at Oaklawn Community Mental Health Center, she also has been able to help the woman,

The pair ended up being extraordinarily helpful to Karen in the midst of her responsibilities: "I don't know what I would have done without them."

who struggles with bipolar disorder, to navigate and tap into needed social services. So the relationship has been mutually beneficial in a number of ways, Karen noted.

Relative to the forgiveness passage, Karen said that both of her guests have prison records. "People are just so unforgiving of that," she said.

As she has witnessed this couple's experience, she said, "This passage has been so important to me. I felt like it was given to me—that the past just needs to be forgiven so they can move on, and I feel like they've felt that, at least in our home and our church community."

That church community is Fellowship of Hope, and Karen has been an integral part of it for 37 years, including the first 15 when the group operated as a common treasury. Karen easily recognizes John 20:21-23 in this key aspect of her life as well.

Being part of the common treasury was "very special," she remembers, and thus its disbanding was "like a divorce—pretty painful."

"We were quite a fearful lot of disciples at that time," (continued on p. 6)

Editor's note: Karen received permission from her guests to share in this article about her relationship with them.

Delegates represent conference at Columbus 2009

breathe ANd be FiLLed

CONVENTION 2009 John 20:21-22 NRSV

Among the many congregational delegates who attend the denominational convention every two years are also delegates representing conferences of Mennonite Church USA. Eleven people represented IN-MI Mennonite Conference at the biennial convention held June 30 to July 5, 2009, in Columbus, Ohio. Five of them offer their perspectives:

Maria Byler

Benton Mennonite, Goshen, Ind. | young adult representative

I really valued the chance to learn more about our conference and the Mennonite church as a whole. Attending the convention helped me look at issues in the church that are broader than just what happens in congregations. We heard from many Mennonite Church agencies. There also were very brief opportunities for discussion. We barely had time to scratch the surface on many topics, but the chance to exchange some words with other delegates from across the country was valuable. Now, the work that was done there is best put to use through continuing conversations in congregations and conferences. I look forward to further discussions!



Carole Ricketts Corey

Michigan State University Mennonite Fellowship, East Lansing, Mich. | pastor

Convention is an odd mixture of business, fellowship, worship and fun. It was exhausting for many delegates. The adult worship was theologically moving and transforming. While most of our time as delegates was “business as usual” without too much dissent, the final discussion and vote on homosexuality proved difficult for many. It was an emotionally charged time. I pray as we continue to move forward in conversation that we only edify the church, with discernment and love—love for one another, for the church and for the God who has created us.



Maria Crockett

House of Power Fellowship, Elkhart, Ind. | pastor

I enjoyed the unity at the meeting, with all the different churches, and the opportunities for networking.



I also learned that Mennonites are not always quiet people; we get down to business! Some people at my table changed all of a sudden from being very quiet to speaking up about why they felt the way they did. People were able to disagree in a peaceful way, and at the end we were able to leave in brotherly/sisterly love.

This was my second convention. I thought it was organized very well. People were willing to help others find where they were needing to go, and would follow up later to see if you found what you were needing.

It was good to find out what was going on in our denomination. To actually be there and put faces with names makes you more interested when you see things later in print or on e-mail. I think, “Now I have a relationship with these people and know their character more than just their name.” I become more concerned with what they’re doing. I like that.

Gene Hartman

Emma Mennonite, Topeka, Ind. | pastor (also served as chair of the former IN-MI Transition Team)

As has been my experience at past conventions, the group interaction around the delegate tables was the highlight of the 2009 convention. Meeting and sharing thoughts and experiences with other Mennonites from different areas of the country helps to expand my thinking and understanding. I also appreciated the way in which the denominational statement, “Vision: Healing and Hope,” was recited at the beginning of the delegate sessions. It was a good reminder for me of why Mennonite Church USA exists and of the goal we strive to achieve by the grace of God.



Frances Ringenberg

Prairie Street Mennonite, Elkhart, Ind. | Missional Leadership Team member

As a delegate I inhabited a Small Round Tableworld. Eight gathered, finding connections, learning names. Discussion was warm and awkward, small talk and flashes of deep connection, some times of waning interest and others of leaning in with energy. Then came the hard work of resolutions. This Small Round Tableworld managed gentleness, making space, listening and encouraging each to speak, wanting each position heard. One Small Tableworld.

Others representing the conference were Randy Detweiler, Howard-Miami Mennonite, Kokomo, Ind.; Brent Eash, moderator, Shore Mennonite, Shipshewana, Ind.; Dan Miller, lead conference minister, Walnut Hill Mennonite, Goshen; Izaete Nafziger, North Goshen Mennonite; Samuel Wilson, Missional Leadership Team member, Community Christian Fellowship Ministries, Detroit, Mich.; and Bob Yoder, Gifts Development Team chair, First Mennonite of Middlebury (Ind.)





Brent Eash serves as moderator of the IN-MI Conference Missional Leadership Team. He also is a pastor at Shore Mennonite, Shipshewana, Ind.

from the moderator

Breathing that tasty air

“THE AIR IS DIFFERENT IN HERE—that smell ...”

I was sitting in an office, noticing that smell—almost a taste, even—of air that has a little extra ozone (I think), air being cycled through an air cleanser. It’s the same smell you sometimes notice after a spring rain—air from which the dust and thickness of humidity have been removed. It always gives me new energy, and renews a hunger for it that I’ve nearly forgotten in the interlude of its absence. I wish I could always breathe that tasty air.

I feel that way about the Spirit. I think about that ozone air when I read John 20:22 where Jesus, having appeared to the locked-in, fearful disciples, “breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’” The air in that darkened room—heavy with fear, disappointment and disillusionment—must have been transformed with Jesus’ Spirit breath—fog becoming focus, weariness converting to energy, confusion becoming purpose. They must have gasped to take it in.

With that release of Spirit breath, Jesus releases the locked-in potential of the church into the world. He released the disciples from captivity to their fear, for engagement with those whom they’d feared. And he released them from paralysis—sending them as he had been sent—for the purpose of releasing others. “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them” may be translated, “If you release the sins of any, they are released.” Jesus also speaks of an alternative choice, that

“Sometimes it’s good, even necessary, to hold my breath. But if I want to keep living, renewing the life-giving oxygen/carbon dioxide exchange, I must release that breath.”

“Breathe and be filled” ... (continued from p. 4)

she described, but then added, “A new life has come, and I believe it is the new life of that spirit of forgiveness of each other that has enabled our body to continue.”

Today, she said, “I feel like it’s very alive and well, and now we’re having young people from Goshen (Ind.) College come who are interested in finding out about community lifestyle ... so it feels like our past is still part of us in a renewed and different way.”

Karen laughed as she recalled a favorite conversation with her daughter, one of Karen and Karl’s two grown children: “Since both my husband and I come from very large families, my daughter would say, ‘What are *our* kids going to do? They won’t have any cousins.’ And I would say, ‘Well, you need to join a church and have a church family.’”

Karen added that most of her own brothers and sisters live far away. “They know my whole history more than other people, but the fact is that my church has definitely become my family here.”

And Karen has found her place of peace among them. —Noël King is a freelance writer from Scottsville, Va.

of retaining sins, and retaining—perhaps holding—ourselves and others in sin.

It’s almost a warning, like to keep breathing. To keep alive, I must take in—and release—air. I may hold my breath, but not for long. Sometimes it’s good, even necessary, to hold my breath. But if I want to keep living, renewing the life-giving oxygen/carbon dioxide exchange, I must release that breath.

So also with the disciples, then and now. Those who would follow Jesus must not hold onto the breath of what is past; what is frightening, or comforting; what has gone wrong, or well. And especially the heavy air of sin, our own and that of others. To retain that breath is suffocating. That breath must be released, so that new breath can be taken in.

Maybe I don’t breathe in that renewing Spirit breath as often as I wish because I’m holding in that last one, which was pretty good. Or maybe it was better than the one I’m likely to get now in the polluted atmosphere of all the sin in and around me. So I slowly suffocate, or breathe shallowly, and energy dissipates.

Thank God, Jesus shows up to tell me to keep breathing. “Risk it!” he says, “Let it out, because I’ve got that tasty air! Let me breathe Spirit into you again. I’m releasing you, sending you out from here, and I want you to release sin—your own and others.” Maybe that’s another way to imagine missional; it’s like breathing that tasty air of the Holy Spirit. Breathe, and be filled!—*be*

On forgiveness

“Too many people come into community to find something, to belong to a dynamic group, to find a life that approaches the ideal. If we come into community without knowing that the reason we come is to discover the mystery of forgiveness, we will soon be disappointed.”—Jean Vanier, *Community and Growth*

“The test of forgiving lies with healing the lingering pain of the past, not with forgetting that the past ever happened.”—Lewis B. Smedes, *Forgive and Forget*

“Not forgiving is like drinking rat poison and then waiting for the rat to die.”—Anne Lamott, *Traveling Mercies*

“Unfortunately, though we often talk about forgiveness within the church, very often by the way we deal with things—attempting to suppress conflict, not making judgments, keeping things secret, not enforcing the ethical conditions we talk about, not holding the powerful accountable—we actually create a situation that stops people from being able to forgive.”—Peter Horsfield, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation in Situations of Sexual Assault*

“Forgiveness is not an occasional art, it is a permanent attitude.”—Martin Luther

“Forgiveness is an eschatological act. It’s a sign that the kingdom—that is not yet—is already present. It’s a way to live now what will one day be.”—Linda Oyer, *Mennonite Mission Network*

conference news

Mid-states conferences' Festival 2010 postponed

Plans for a **Worship Festival 2010** gathering of the four mid-states Mennonite Church USA conferences (Central District, Illinois, Ohio and IN-MI) have been postponed. Mid-states area conference leaders had commissioned a group to plan the festival. The planning group's chair, Kathy Smith, in consultation with Brent Eash, IN-MI moderator and liaison to the group from the mid-states conference leaders, made the difficult decision to end plans for a 2010 gathering.

"I have decided that although this event is a great idea and would be a wonderful way to celebrate the similarities and differences within our conferences, there are many roadblocks that are hindering this event coming to fruition for 2010," Kathy wrote to planning group members.

Conflicts with the chosen date, the current economic climate, and ongoing scheduling conflicts and personnel changes in the planning group figured into the decision to defer the plans. On behalf of the mid-states area conference leaders, Brent Eash thanked Kathy and the planning group: "Although we were unable to see the worship festival happen in 2010, learning about the challenges will help future groups who might take on a similar project."

Interim conference minister for leadership transitions named

Doug Kaufman began his role as interim conference minister for leadership transitions Aug. 4. He will work half time with credentialing and search processes throughout the conference until a person is hired for the long-term position, which may be before the end of December. Doug is continuing to serve half time on the pastoral team at Benton Mennonite, Goshen, Ind., and as interim assistant conference regional minister for the Southeast Goshen and Swa-Nee Lake area councils.

Missional Leadership Team (MLT) update

The MLT met Friday, Aug. 28. They began conversations about how they will relate with different parts of the conference (staff, leadership groups, and constituents). They will meet again Oct. 27.

Search committee for new regional pastors and new search/credentialing minister

Ruben Chupp, chair of the Church Life Commission; and Gary Martin, Missional Leadership Team member; are working with Dan Miller, lead conference minister, on finding five new part-time regional pastors and a new half-time conference minister for leadership transitions. They are giving careful consideration to the names suggested by delegates at Annual Sessions in June.

Conference resource advocate ends term

Thank you to **Eldon Stoltzfus**, pastor of Forks Mennonite, Middlebury, Ind., who completed three-plus years as the first resource advocate for IN-MI Conference this summer! In this role, he received information and training in the vast array of resources created by Mennonite Church USA agencies, and then worked at connecting congregations to these resources. He also communicated to the agencies feedback from congregations about current resources and suggestions for additional resources.

"I consider it a privilege to have served for the first term of this new role for the conference and denomination," Eldon said. "The potential for creative and positive contributions to the mission and ministry of conference congregations through the resource advocate role continues to expand."

The position is currently open.

"Many Gifts: Calling and Growing Congregational Leaders"

The IN-MI **Gifts Development Team** introduced this booklet during a seminar at Annual Sessions this summer. Developed by Mennonite Church Canada in cooperation with Mennonite Church USA, this resource for pastors and other church leaders works at calling out and nurturing the gifts of children, youth and adults; and at deepening our commitments to forming a people of God, becoming a global church, and growing leaders. This resource can be purchased (print version) or downloaded (free version) at: www.mennonitechurch.ca/resourcecentre/ResourceView/5/11692

—*Bob Yoder, chair, Gifts Development Team*

ministry transitions

Beginnings

- **Jeff Mumaw**, pastor of administration and pastor of community life at Clinton Frame Mennonite, Goshen, Ind., was ordained Aug. 16 by Doug Kaufman, interim conference minister for leadership transitions, and Dale Shenk, overseer.



Clinton Frame:
Jeff Mumaw

Endings

- **Rachel Miller Jacobs** ended as pastor of faith formation at Kern Road Mennonite, South Bend, Ind., Aug. 16.

This issue is available in **color** online:

im.mennonite.net/news/gospel_evangel/gospel_evangel.php

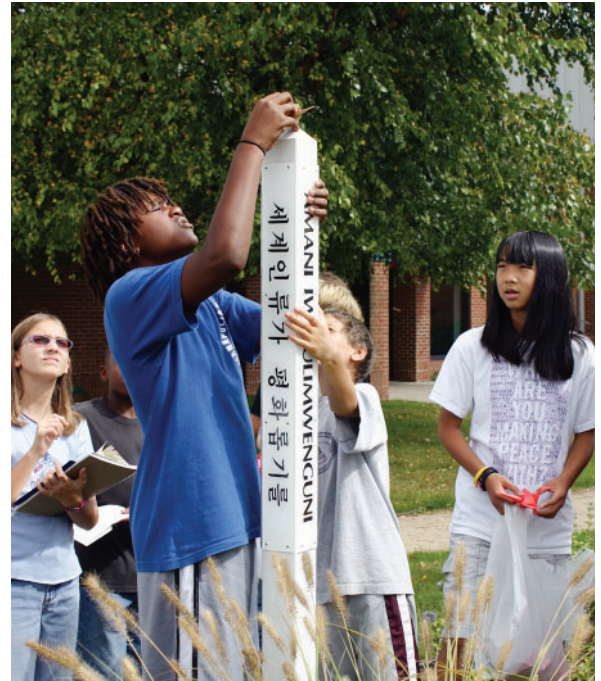


Bethany sixth-graders dedicate peace pole, learn nonviolent responses to violence

“*DONA NOBIS PACEM*” (give us peace) echoed throughout **Bethany Christian Schools’** Friendship Garden as sixth-graders dedicated the school’s peace pole on International Peace Day (Monday, Sept. 21). The pole reads, “May peace prevail on Earth” in English, Korean, Spanish and Swahili—some of the native languages spoken by Bethany students.

The pole—purchased by the school’s Peace Society—was installed in the Friendship Garden, which was built in memory of Kari Nunemaker, a Bethany student who was murdered in January 1991. The idea for the pole arose from discussions on how the Peace Society could impact the school and symbolize who we are. Faculty member J.D. Smucker said, “To have a symbol of peace in our school is one way for people to be reminded that our school is a community in which we do more than just tolerate each other. We are a community striving to be Christ-like in how we relate to each other and people we do not agree with.”

The dedication also included a peace rap created by several students and the decoration of the pole with origami peace cranes folded by students.



The sixth-grade class observed International Peace Day by integrating peace activities into their various classes.

(above left) Steve Thomas of Goshen’s Peacemakers Academy (and pastor of Walnut Hill Mennonite, Goshen) helps students think of creative ways to confront violent situations nonviolently and to prevent violent situations from happening by learning to work together. In one simulation game, students quickly learned that they all could get more candy when they worked together than when they focused on how much each person could get on his or her own. In another session, they learned how different personality styles tend to react differently to violence and identified their own style.

(above right) Sixth-graders decorate the peace pole with origami cranes they folded.

(News release and photos provided by BCS)

Read more online: www.bethanycs.net/Peace_Day_2009

Missional Seeds Giving Club

Join in the mission of IN-MI Conference!

With our faith communities knit together, we are able to do what we could not do as single congregations and individuals.

The inaugural issue of the **Missional Seeds Giving Club** quarterly newsletter, launched this summer, features a story about a “Bold Giving Sunday” experiment initiated by **Holdeman Mennonite**, Wakarusa, Ind., in response to reading about **Community Christian Fellowship’s** (Detroit, Mich.) annual invitation to sacrificial giving. (View a sample copy online: im.mennonite.net/news/missional_seeds/missionalseeds.php)

Members of the conference’s giving club receive this quarterly newsletter in addition to a membership certificate, their names listed in an annual financial synopsis of club contributions (unless requested otherwise), and the joy of being able to share in what God is up to in IN-MI Conference!

You’re invited to become a member and to commit to giving \$25, \$50, \$100 or \$250 or more on a quarterly basis. Proceeds will be used directly in the overall ministry of the conference.

Download a Missional Seeds brochure—at im.mennonite.net (under “Donate”)—and learn about the variety of ministries that IN-MI Conference offers. Or, contact the conference office: imoffice@im.mennonite.net

Thank you to all who are contributing!

Pastoral Leadership Team Weekend

“**Finding Our Way: Navigating the challenges of authentic engagement.**” Join us at the annual Pastoral Leadership Team Weekend, **Oct. 30–Nov. 1** at **Amigo Centre**, Sturgis, Mich.! Participants will connect their hopes, disappointments and questions with biblical and theoretical material; engage in various indoor and outdoor activities and reflect on the experience of learning new skills; and preview a tool (The Six Challenge Matrix) to aid congregations as they re-imagine church and re-engage God’s activity among and around them. Presenter: **Dan Miller**, lead conference minister. Sponsors: Amigo Centre and IN-MI Conference. Contact Amigo (269 651-2811) or download a brochure: im.mennonite.net

Annual Sessions 2010

The **Middlebury-Bristol Area Council** has agreed to host IN-MI Conference’s **Annual Sessions 2010**, to be held **July 8–10** at **Pleasant View Mennonite** in Goshen! Thank you in advance to Bonneyville Mennonite, First Mennonite of Middlebury, Forks Mennonite and Pleasant View Mennonite for the major part they’ll play in making it possible for representatives from our congregations to meet next year.