

WESTERN DISTRICT CONFERENCE E-MEMO

September 20, 2011

*A weekly communication for:
WDC Churches and Pastors*

WDC Executive Board, Commission, Committee and Task Force members

Any content may be used in bulletins and newsletters and forwarded to congregational leaders and members.

WDC E-Memo is also available at: www.mennowdc.org (Conference Life / Publications)

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Making Tracks

It's that time of year when all sorts of critters are walking across the sandy driveway. We've seen the tracks of deer and turkeys, armadillo and turtles, raccoons and possum, some coyote tracks, a few lizard and snake trails, and some skittery marks that could be anything. During the summer we have all sorts of tracks as well, but if you're not up early, the critter tracks are quickly covered by camper tracks. Those are also fun to see--ever try to identify your friends by their shoe tracks?

Camp Mennoscah is making tracks, too. Our camp footprint gained a new pool this summer. Mike Albright, our new maintenance coordinator, is making tracks in the work he does for us. We had 538 campers (up from 494!) and 176 staff and volunteers who left their mark at camp. It's a bit late, but two new canoes are ready to make paths in the river. Our septic system left a stinky mess behind and we're cleaning up those tracks this fall. The Retreat Commission is making tracks to make Camp Mennoscah our own non-profit organization.

The "tracks" that we are working with right now are our church and family groups. We're finalizing the schedule for 2012 and looking to fill some days (both weekdays and weekends) with church groups, family reunions, or any other fun-loving group. Every year for the past several years we've increased the number of campers at camp, but we haven't increased the number of groups. We'd love to have more families, churches, and other folks making tracks at Camp Mennoscah.

We think we've got some great creation and made some great improvements at camp. We're ready to help you plan a retreat for your church or family (this doesn't mean it won't take work, but what fun the retreat will be). We're ready to see more faces, wash more dishes (what!?!), and have more folks go back home refreshed and ready for more.

Want to talk about making tracks to camp? Give us a call at [620-297-3290](tel:620-297-3290) or email us at campmno@mennowdc.org for more information.

--*Olivia Bartel, Camp Mennoscah Director*

Coming Events at Camp Mennoscah

Sept. 30-Oct. 2--Fall Scrapbooking Retreat

Oct.16--Dam Removal

Now to later--All sorts of groups and planning for 2012

WDC Announcements

1. Last call for Scrapbookers! It's nearing the time of the Camp Mennoscah Fall Scrapbooking Retreat and some of you have not yet signed up! We welcome you to join us for a time of cropping and snack-filled fellowship--away from the chaos of home. Find the brochure at www.mennowdc.org in the Coming Events section or give Camp Mennoscah a call at [620-297-3290](tel:620-297-3290) for more information.
2. You probably thought we forgot. NOPE! We have not forgotten all our wonderful and amazing and nifty volunteers and staff who helped us out this summer at Camp Mennoscah. All 176 of you have our grateful and neverending thanks for giving of your time and energy--and for braving the neverending heat. You are so absolutely important to making Camp Mennoscah great. Thank you! And thank you again.
3. Freeze and 'Frigerate. Camp Mennoscah is looking for a large chest freezer and a refrigerator in new/good condition. We need a chest freezer to keep the huge quantities of meat and other food used over the summer so the kitchen freezers can be used for things other than storage. As for the refrigerator, anyone who has fed a family group in the Retreat Center knows that the one fridge there isn't enough space for several meals of food. So, if you're downsizing or have a spare, contact us at campmno@mennowdc.org or [620-297-3290](tel:620-297-3290).
4. "Church Revitalization" is the theme for **Reference Council** on Saturday, **November 19**, 8:30 AM-1 PM (includes lunch), hosted at Tabor Mennonite Church, rural Newton, KS. Transitional pastor Randy Smith, currently at First Mennonite Church, Halstead, will be the keynote presenter along with testimonies from churches that have experienced revitalization and growth. Reference Council is a gathering for the Western District Conference Board, Commissions, Committees, Task Forces and pastors. Groups may schedule a meeting for the afternoon. RSVP your attendance by November 11 to: wdc@mennowdc.org or [316-283-6300](tel:316-283-6300).
5. Rental Space Available: The WDC office building at 2500 North Main in North Newton, KS has space available for lease. The space includes a reception area, 2 offices and a meeting room for a total of 703 square feet. An addition room of 208 sq ft can also be added to the lease. If interested contact Phyllis Regier, WDC Business Manager at [316-283-6300](tel:316-283-6300) for more information.

6. Advent Planning Evening - Oct. 20. For pastors and worship planners - are you interested in spending an evening together conversing and brainstorming about planning Advent 2011? Please express interest directly to Marlene Bogard at mbogard@mennowdc.org, 316-283-6300. Tentatively, we are thinking of Thursday, Oct. 20, somewhere in south central Kansas. Tell me: 1. If you are interested. 2. How many folks you might bring. 3. What would you find most helpful: conversations about preaching? worship leading? visuals? children's features? more?

7. Open Invitation to Women's Gathering about Leadership & the Church - Thursday, October 27th at First Mennonite Church in Newton (429 E First St.) 7:00 – 8:30 pm, with light refreshments and tea - Join Joanna Shenk of Mennonite Church USA national staff and coordinator of the Women in Leadership project. Since 2009 Joanna has been collecting statistics and stories related to women's leadership in the Mennonite church. She is interested to hear about the experiences of women leaders in this area—whether in pastoral roles, administrative roles or other leadership capacities. In your experience, what kind of leadership is valued in Mennonite Church USA? In what ways have leadership positions excluded women? What models of empowering leadership have you seen? How can Mennonites talk openly about power and patriarchy in our institutions? What ideas do you have for empowering women, and also men, to lead using their God-given gifts? Joanna will facilitate discussion around these topics, and based on the size of the gathering, there may also be small group interaction. All interested women are welcome! Upon arrival at First Mennonite, please enter through the south (by the playground) or east (gravel parking lot) doors. The gathering will be held in the fellowship hall. Please be in touch with Joanna if you have questions: joannas@mennoniteusa.org or [574.226.7297](tel:574.226.7297).

Bulletin announcement (please use in Sept. 25 and Oct. 16 bulletins): **All interested women are invited to a Women's Gathering about Leadership and the Church on Thursday, October 27 at First Mennonite Church in Newton (429 E First St.), 7:00 – 8:30 pm, with light refreshments and tea.** Join Joanna Shenk of Mennonite Church USA national staff and coordinator of the Women in Leadership project who is interested in hearing about the experiences of women leaders in this area—in pastoral roles, administrative roles or other leadership capacities. Joanna will facilitate discussion around a number of topics concerning women, leadership, and the church. Upon arrival at First Mennonite, please enter through the south (by the playground) or east (gravel parking lot) doors. The gathering will be held in the basement fellowship hall. Please contact Joann with questions or to RSVP: joannas@mennoniteusa.org or [574.226.7297](tel:574.226.7297).

MC USA Announcements

1. How do we talk to each other about talking to each other?

Join us at Hesston College as we work together— participants choosing the discussion topics, in Open Spaces style, using different techniques such as Samoan Circle and

Round Table, talking in ways that go beyond debating each other, but also—hopefully—moving beyond just agreeing to disagree. We're calling the conference **Getting Beyond Them and Us—to We**. We don't want to just get beyond. We want to be transformed.

Anabaptist Vision and Discipleship Series

Hesston College

October 28-30, 2011

Early bird registration until October 1: www.hesston.edu/AVDS

Michele Hershberger, Chair of the Bible and Ministry Division, Hesston College

2. Christine Guth, Anabaptist Disabilities Network (ADNet) Program Director (www.adnetonline.org), is collecting stories and photos of congregations that have completed projects (or moves) to create greater accessibility for people with disabilities. Has your congregation taken steps in the last year or two to enhance accessibility? (Examples: elevator, ramp, lift, accessible restrooms, improved sound system, parking improvements, better signage, move to an accessible location, etc.) Contact her at: [\(574\) 535-7053](tel:5745357053); Voice/Fax: [1-877-214-9838](tel:18772149838) (toll free); christine@adnetonline.org

3. See attached brochure promoting the upcoming **School for Leadership Training** (SLT) event that is being co-sponsored by Everence and hosted on the campus of Eastern Mennonite Seminary **January 16-18, 2012**. The keynote speaker Walter Brueggemann is a world renowned theologian who will be addressing the topic: **God & Mammon: Reframing Stewardship Amidst Abundance, Scarcity and Conflict**.

4. MARKET ON THE GREEN is the Bethel College Women's Association's feature event at Fall Festival on Saturday, October 8. The Market is a perennial favorite of Fall Fest attendees, and is our major source of income to fund special projects at Bethel. We invite you to contribute generously to the Market—all kinds of baked goods (zwiebach, peppernuts, and poppy seed rolls are big sellers), noodles, snacks and candies, garden produce, and jams and jellies. Holiday aprons might also attract buyers. Bring your items to the Market tent that morning. For more information, call Valerie Klaassen at [\(316\) 799-2641](tel:3167992641). (*Please run this announcement in your Sept. 25 and Oct. 2 bulletins.*)

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