

WESTERN DISTRICT CONFERENCE E-MEMO

January 24, 2012

*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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WDC Fiscal Year-End, January 31, 2012

by Phyllis Regier, WDC Business Manager

The Western District Conference 2011 financial year draws to a close at the end of this month. We are grateful for all the contributions that we have received from our congregations, individuals and organizations. As we close out this fiscal year we are also very grateful for income from our Bequest Fund which helps us meet our expenses for the year. This fund is comprised of bequests from generous members of the conference who have used estate planning to benefit charitable organizations like ours. As well as providing a base of support for the future, 10% of the Bequest Fund is transferred to the WDC budget annually which benefits the conference operations today. There has been a decrease in giving from our congregations for the last several years so this fund is critical for maintaining the conference's ministries today.

An end of the year contribution from Agri-Urban also provides critical financial support for our conference. Agri-Urban was created as a unique method of raising funds for Western District as well as two other organizations. The purpose was to provide a way for rural people and city people to work together to raise money. Agri-Urban provides cattle that the farmers raise and the profits of the sale of these cattle are distributed to WDC as well as Mennonite Church USA and Bethel College. The urban counterparts provide financing for the cost of the cattle and feed.

Raising cattle has been the main focus of Agri-Urban since its beginning in the early 1970's. This spring Agri-Urban is launching a new program that encourages grain farmers to participate by designating the income from an acre or more of cropland to the organization. To offset the costs for farmers, urban residents will be asked to provide funds to help cover the costs of raising the crops. A brochure describing the project will be distributed in our congregations in the next few weeks.

Thanks again to all our contributors for their support for Western District Conference.

WDC Announcements

1. Agri-Urban would like to invite all of its supporters and people who are interested in Agri-Urban to an appreciation dinner on February 11 at 6:00 p.m. in the Eden Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall, 4 miles west and 2 miles north of Moundridge, KS. Please make reservations with your local Agri-Urban Board member or the Western District office at [316-283-6300](tel:316-283-6300) by February 5. *Open Road* from Bethel College will provide the program.
2. Pastors and church leaders are invited to "Maintenance to Missional: Looking Back So We Can Move Forward" on Saturday, February 11, 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM, planned and hosted by the three Mennonite churches of Moundridge, KS and by Western District Conference. Presenters are Wilbert Shenk, Conrad Kanagy, and Gilberto Flores. Cost: \$25/person or \$75 per church for as many as can come. See www.mennowdc.org - Upcoming Events for information and registration. Register by February 3.
3. "The Pastor's Role in Difficult Congregational Discussions" is the theme for Pastors' Day Apart on March 1, 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS. More information and registration coming next week.
4. The WDC Conference Resource Library will be closed Wednesday, January 25, for training on new library software. (The WDC office will remain open.)
5. Available: Wurlitzer Concert series electronic organ with full rhythm, programmable register, one finger chords. Price is very negotiable. Call Arlen Goertzen at Schowalter Villa, [620-386-0316](tel:620-386-0316). (Photo attached.)
6. Available: First Mennonite Church, Newton, has glass snack tray sets that are no longer needed in their kitchen. They would be available for donation to any church or organization that could use them. Please contact First Mennonite at office@firstmennonitewton.org or call [316-283-0273](tel:316-283-0273)
7. WDC Immigration Task Force members are available to preach in congregations throughout the conference on immigration. We are open to teaching Sunday school, midweek or small groups as well. We are here to resource, connect and dialogue with churches. Check out the link on the WDC website. Contact Nita Nikkel to coordinate a time for a member to visit your church: nitaknikkel@gmail.com or call [620-217-0249](tel:620-217-0249).

Kansas Announcements

1. StoryTime! We invite Pre-schoolers ages 3-5 to join in the fun on Wednesday mornings at 10 am. at the Western District Conference Resource Library. Spring session begins Feb. 8. Call now to reserve your space: [316-283-6300](tel:316-283-6300).

MC USA Announcements

1. You're invited to a literary arts festival—Mennonite/s Writing VI: Solos and Harmonies, March 29-April 1, 2012 at Eastern Mennonite University, co-sponsored by Conrad Grebel University College. Features playwright Vern Thiessen; poet Greg Orr; a growing list of Mennonite scholars and writers including Katherine Arnoldi, Stephen Raleigh Byler, Todd Davis, Dora Dueck, Jeff Gundy, Ann Hostetler, Jean Janzen, Julia Spicher Kasdorf, Keith Ratzlaff, Sofia Samatar, Hildi Froese Tiessen, and Rudy Wiebe. Learn more and register by March 16 at www.emu.edu/mennos-writing Early registration discount available through February 3: Regular, \$100; Senior, \$75; Student, \$35. Registration includes admission to all events and Saturday evening banquet.

Western District Conference

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