

WESTERN DISTRICT CONFERENCE E-MEMO

May 8, 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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Pick My Brain

by Marlene Bogard, Minister of Christian Formation

In anticipation of our WDC Assembly gathering this summer, I offer you some wonderful resources on listening, healthy listening and group process. Perhaps you want to utilize some of them as your congregations work through the resolutions that will be presented, or perhaps there are on-going issues in your church that need careful process. To find more information about each of these books, or to reserve them using your very own Library Card with PIN, visit www.mennowdc.org/library/catalog or email me at crlib@mennowdc.org.

Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White: thoughts on religion, morality and politics by Adam Hamilton. He attempts to demonstrate that the religious two-party system (liberals vs. conservatives) no longer makes much sense for the church. What does matter is a passion for Christian faithfulness and the struggle to understand and embody the scriptures. He speaks desperately needed words of reconciliation. Available as DVD study and as book.

The Little Book of Dialogue for Difficult Subjects by Lisa Schirch. Offers a hopeful approach to handling tension-filled topics using principles of dialogue, which allows people in conflict to listen to each other, affirm common ground and explore differences in a safe environment.

The Little Book of Cool Tools for Hot Topics by Ronald S. Kraybill. How to help people hear each other when they feel like shouting, how to focus on the issues rather than on personalities, how to employ practices like interviews, small-group discussions, role reversal and more.

Practicing the sacred art of listening : a guide to enrich your relationships and kindle your spiritual life--the Listening Center workshop by Kay Lindahl. Examines the ways we are called to deep listening including contemplative listening, reflective listening, heart listening, listening in groups, conversations and more.

Anxious Christian: can God use your anxiety for good? by Rhett Smith.

Discover how anxiety can actually be helpful in our spiritual formation, how God might use it as a catalyst to move us forward.

Promises and Peril: understanding and managing change and conflict in congregations by David Brubaker. Change need not cause conflict if we understand their dynamic relationship in

congregations. Helps us to discover the importance of carefully designed decision-making structures and insightful leadership.

Leadership and Interaction Styles: Understanding why we behave the way we do in groups by Dan Dick. Will help to identify, understand, harmonize and employ a variety of behavioral styles in group settings. Rich diversity present in any group can be a healthy and productive strength. Might be just the tool you need to work more efficiently with your committee!

Blessed Connections: relationships that sustain vital ministry by Judith Schwanz. How to do the work of ministry without losing your own soul! Schwanz provides clear guidance for maintaining personal well-being and avoiding clergy burn-out.

Stilling the Storm: worship and congregational leadership in difficult times by Kathleen Smith. A wise and deep exploration of how worship can uphold churches in times of crisis, conflict, transition.

Humble Leadership: being radically open to God's guidance and grace by Graham Standish. Topics include: Humble leadership; Self-aware leadership; Prayerful leadership; Unifying leadership; Spirit-led leadership; Humbly effective leadership.

WDC Announcements

1. Join in and act on the unity we already have! That's Jesus' challenge to us as we read John 17. It's also the theme for our 2012 WDC Assembly, to be held July 6-8 at Magnuson Hotel & Meridian Convention Center in Oklahoma City: Becoming One to be Sent in Christ. So will you join us? Help us discern? Learn? Pray? Celebrate? Together, all of us make up Western District Conference. Check your church office for registration information or see www.mennowdc.org (Upcoming Events).

2. Make your lodging arrangements for the WDC Annual Assembly by June 6 - call the Magnuson Hotel & Meridian Convention Center in Oklahoma City at [1-800-784-7830](tel:1-800-784-7830). To get the \$69/night rate, use the code 13408 and identify yourself with the "Western District Mennonite Convention" group. Please do NOT make your reservations online, as this will not allow usage of meeting rooms at no cost.

3. Is your congregation in a Sister-Church relationship? A wonderful opportunity for you to get together will be at WDC Assembly on July 6-8 in Oklahoma City. A special gathering will be held Saturday night after the evening worship service.

4. We're almost ready for a good night's rest! The Mattress Melodies Camp Sing at Faith Mennonite in Newton was a success, raising \$3154.03 for new mattresses (minus a few expenses). That's about 3 cabins of mattresses! Thank you to all the wonderful folks who helped out with the event, from our organizers, to Neva Kaufman who embroidered the pillowcases used to collect donations to our musicians, and YOU, the wonderful folks who sang and gave generously. We'll see you at the next Camp Sing!

5. We're Crafty! Camp Mennoscah is one crafty place and our snazzy crafts leader for the summer is looking for the following items: fun colored old tee shirts, yarn, old CDs, and buttons. Collect these items and drop them off at the Western District Conference offices in North Newton no later than June 1st. We'll pick them up and use them with our summer youth camps. Contact Camp Mennoscah at [620-297-3290](tel:620-297-3290) with any questions.

6. Whoa, horses! Camp Mennoscah has been swamped by at least a gazillion registration forms this past week. This is EXTRA EXCITING--but Olivia, the ultimate slowpoke, is behind in getting them entered. She'll get to them as soon as she stops stargazing and counting catfish. Your confirmation emails will be coming soon. We still have room for more campers, so invite a friend, bring your sister or brother or cousin. There's gobs of fun stuff to do at Camp Mennoscah!

7. Come visit! Camp Mennoscah has some weekends this summer that are waiting for you! There are plenty of catfish to count, a swimming pool to splash in, and lots of time to look at the back of your eyelids. Feeling adventurous? Cook all your meals over a campfire and avoid having dishes to wash. Suggested menu: brats and at least 5 marshmallows per person. Contact Camp Mennoscah at campmno@mennowdc.org or [620-297-3290](tel:620-297-3290) to reserve your weekend. Mention CODE MARSHMALLOW PARTY for a free bag of marshmallows with your confirmed reservation. (Small print: Does not apply to reservations already confirmed. Expires June 7, 2012.)

8. Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, KS has an exciting opportunity for an individual wishing to pursue their calling to work with youth and young adults. We're looking for a high energy person with a passion for evangelism, heart for worship and a desire to build a solid ministry program with the youth and young adults. An excellent candidate will be an engaging teacher, possess strong interpersonal and organizational skills, have a sound biblical and theological background, have experience developing/maintaining high quality youth programs, and be familiar with the Safe Sanctuary Policy. Education: A minimum of some college, preferably a bachelor's degree OR adequate experience in professional youth ministry/worship ministry. For more information and a full job description contact Pati Funk at youthpastor4tmc@gmail.com, or Pati Funk, 1776 Goldenrod, Hillsboro, KS 67063, [620-382-7556](tel:620-382-7556). Application deadline is May 25. This opening is posted on the WDC website at: <http://mennowdc.org/conference-life/pastoral-openings/>

Kansas Announcements

1. "Seek Peace and Pursue It" is the theme for the worship resources that are found in the Summer 2012 LEADER, written by Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, KS, Pastor Joanna Harader. Join Joanna and others in a resourcing time on Saturday morning, May 12, 9-11 am, at New Creation Fellowship in Newton, KS. Call [316-283-6300](tel:316-283-6300) or email wdc@mennowdc.org to reserve your spot.

2. Summer Story Time at the Conference Resource Library features tales about Marvelous Me! Children age 3-8 are invited to attend a fun time with storyteller Amanda Friesen and a roomful of friends. Call [316-283-6300](tel:316-283-6300) to register. First session begins Wednesday, June 13.

3. Bryan Moyer Suderman and Chuck Neufeld and will be performing an all-ages concert at New Creation Fellowship Church, 221 Muse St. Newton, Kansas, on Wednesday, May 20 at 7p.m. Suggested donation of \$5 per person or \$10 per household. Bryan's "SmallTall Music" ministry (www.smalltallmusic.com) has been his "flexible full-time" vocation since 2003, and "Detectives of Divinity," his 5th studio album, is another collection of songs that are deeply scriptural, musically memorable, and readily singable. Canadian Mennonite magazine's review of Bryan's newest CD says "album by album and song by song, Bryan is creating a sound track for the church..." Bryan loves to sing and people of all ages love to sing along, whether in congregational settings, intimate house concerts, or large conferences. Christian Week magazine has described his music as "melodious, guitar-driven folk with simple lyrics that tell important biblical stories and theological truths." Audiences respond to the warmth of his voice,

the contagious nature of his songs, and his signature interactive style of singing and song leading.

Mennonite Church USA Announcements

1. Are you a young adult who wants to serve God next year? Do you know any young adults like this? Mennonite Mission Network service programs are in need of young people who want to join communities and congregations in living Jesus' call to serve! Take a look at Service Adventure, Radical Journey, MVS or DOOR: Dwell and find a way to use your gifts to build God's kingdom. Visit Service.MennoniteMission.net for program info or an application.

2. The Lombard Mennonite Peace Center and the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska are offering the *Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders* at Judson Baptist Church of La Vista, Nebraska (the Omaha area), July 9-13, 2012. The Institute is sponsored by the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska, and is open to church leaders of all denominations. Attached is a brochure (MSTI Nebraska 2012 Brochure) with further information and a registration form. Also attached are other brochures of upcoming training events that would be valuable for both clergy and lay leaders.

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