

November 2010

Clarence's Clarion Call Spirit Abundance

When I begin to crunch budget numbers as a new Conference minister, it is easy for me to move into the mode of being a caretaker of God's scarce and diminishing resources. "What? We are \$81,000 in the red?" OK, so we are typically in the red this time of year. Even so, I can quickly move to an attitude of "God doesn't have much so I better really make it stretch."

The best antidote to counter that miserable perspective is the discipline of thanksgiving for God's abundance. Joel 2 speaks of God's creation abundance in providing us with the necessities of life. "Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the Lord your God....The threshing floors will be filled with grain; the vats will overflow with new wine and oil" (Joel 2:23-24). Growing up in Cornhusker country, I am still amazed that one kernel of seed can result in 800 kernels of corn. One to 800 is a picture of God-engineered abundance. One acre of 200-bushel corn results in 14,560,000 kernels. Imagine corn pouring out of a 16-inch combine auger as a creation picture of God's abundance. Thank you, God!

Even greater is the spiritual abundance announced by the prophet Joel. God announces, "I will pour out my Spirit on all people....Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Joel 2:28, 32). At Pentecost the abundance of the Holy Spirit of God is given to *every* believer, and not just to singular leaders as in the Old Testament.

With the gift of the Spirit come these salvation blessings. "But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because we were so good, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal *by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously* through Jesus Christ our Savior." If

you are a follower of Jesus, God has poured out the Holy Spirit on you – *generously*." Not a drip! Not a drop! You have been dumped on! Abundance! Fourteen million kernels of abundance!

It is by this Spirit bath that we are justified, made right with God. It is by this Spirit that we are given the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7). It is by this Spirit downpour that God's love is poured into our hearts (Romans 5:5). It is in this Spirit shower we begin to experience freedom as we are transformed into the image, the mirror of God (II Corinthians 3:17-18). It is this Spirit immersion that fills us with God-like character of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:16-25). Salvation abundance!

The Spirit further gives each believer a ministry to pass on God's generosity to others. "Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! The variety is wonderful" (I Corinthians 12:7 The Message) Abundant gifts! Abundant God! Give thanks!

---Clarence Rempel, Conference Minister

Western District Conference empowers its Anabaptist/ Mennonite congregations to:

- ***Witness and invite others to faith in Jesus Christ,***
- ***Dwell in just and loving relationships,***
- ***Connect to God's mission in the world.***

WDC prayer reminders

Nov. 7 – Pray for Amanda Rempel who will be commissioned today as the Pastor of Senior Ministries at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, KS.
Nov. 14 – Pray for Hope Greiser Graber who will be licensed today and commissioned as the Youth

Pastor at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS.

Nov. 21 – Pray for Pastors John and Marcia Yoder Schrock as they bid farewell to West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS, today.

Nov. 28 – Give thanks to God for the faithful and fruitful service of our Western District Conference staff. Give thanks for the churches of WDC who serve as beacons of God’s kingdom light in their communities.

Dec. 5 – Pray for Inman Mennonite Church as they gather for a Vision Encounter today and seek God’s guidance into a new future. *(Note: the December issue of Memo will be sent on Dec. 7, which is why a prayer request is included here for Dec. 5.)*

Pastoral openings

(Congregational Information Forms can be viewed at: www.mennowdc.org, Pastoral Openings)

First Mennonite Church, Beatrice, NE - Pastor
First Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, KS - Pastor
Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, KS - Pastor

Transitions

Marty (and Hannah) Troyer, pastor of Houston (TX) Mennonite Church, welcomed a daughter, Clara Sue, on October 16. Congratulations!

Western District Conference is on Facebook!

Find and Friend us for quick links to documents, news items, coming events, photos, more. Send news and photos about your church happenings to wdc@mennowdc.org and we will post it! Also on Facebook: Camp Mennoscah!

The Parish Paper

View the November issue (“What are the Big Picture Trends in Congregations?”) of **The Parish Paper** at: www.mennowdc.org/Publications.html.

Reference Council input

Read the full text of a **worship meditation** on discernment by Doug Penner, Conference Moderator, as well as input on “**Shaping the WDC Vision**” by Clarence Rempel, both given at the WDC Reference Council held October 23 at: <http://www.mennowdc.org/Resources.html>

Check It Out

Need ideas for quality children's books for using in worship or Christian formation?

Follow this link to a fantastic list:

www.mennowdc.org/2010-11-CIO.pdf. Discover books on themes of God's love, praise, thanksgiving, compassion, friendship, and more. Be sure to request "If you give a boy (or a girl) a Bible" for the next time you present Bibles to children. It's just perfect! As always, email or call us to request any of these fine resources. All may be viewed on our web-based catalog at: www.mennowdc.org.

Camp Mennoscah

What a great feeling! **Thanks** to all our roofers and volunteers, we’ve made progress on getting our buildings shingled - and other projects have been completed, too! We are thankful for the many blessings we receive and are especially grateful for our volunteers. Keep updated with what’s going on at Camp Mennoscah on Facebook!

Congratulations!

Bill Zuercher, WDC volunteer and conference planner, and wife Joyce, received the Mennonite Mutual Aid Journey Award on October 10. Recipients are chosen as a result of their belief in and practice of holistic stewardship as a lifetime goal and expression. Included in the recognition was a gift of \$5,000 which the Zuerchers have donated to several ministry opportunities.

Pastors’ Resourcing Day with Marlene Kropf

January 21, 2011: 2-5 p.m. - Tending the Garden: The Pastor's Role in Congregational Christian Formation. **7-9 p.m.** - Worship Planners and Lay leaders join pastors for an evening of receiving inspiration for worship planning. More details forthcoming. Watch Facebook and our website! Sponsored by WDC Resource Commission and AMBS-Great Plains.

Choral Festival

January 22, 2011: Choral Festival with Dr. Mark Suderman, conductor at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS. Sponsored by WDC Music and Worship Task Force. Watch Facebook and our website for more info!

Congregational Spiritual Health

How is faith nurtured in the midst of congregational life? And how are leaders equipped to guide the congregation in its growth? These are the topics Professor Marlene Kropf will explore in an interterm course through the Great Plains Extension of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary **January 11-29, 2011**, at 2500 Place, North Newton, Kansas. Through reading, reflection circles, writing, lectures, class discussion, and prayer, the course will seek to provide biblical understandings, resources, and skills for assessing congregational spiritual health and guiding Christian formation within each arena of congregational life. Class meets Tuesday and Thursday evenings plus Saturdays. Three credit hours. Credit or audit. Special audit rates for AMBS MA or MDiv graduates. Register by December 13 at www.ambs.edu/admissions/register-online, or contact Lois Barrett, director, AMBS–Great Plains, 316-283-7098 or lbarrett@ambs.edu.

Youth Snow Camps

Begin the new year with your youth group enjoying a winter retreat at Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp in Colorado. Snow activities, singing and worship are all part of the weekend.

Junior High Camp - **January 21-23, 2011**

For complete information, see:

<http://www.rmmc.org/page/junior-high-snow-camp>.

Senior High Camp I - **February 18-20, 2011** and Senior High Camp II - **March 18-20, 2011**. For complete information about Senior High Camps I & II, see: <http://rmmc.org/page/senior-high-snow-camp>

AMBS - Pastors Week

Preaching with Imagination and Creativity in the Post-Modern Era is the theme of Pastors Week at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, **January 24–27, 2011**. Dr. Cleophus LaRue, professor at Princeton Theological Seminary and ordained pastor in the National Baptist Convention of America, will be the featured speaker. See more and register online at <http://www.ambs.edu/pastorsweek>

Eastern Mennonite University School for Leadership Training 2011

Dates: **January 17-19, 2011**

Subject: Pentecost Remixed, the Work of the Holy Spirit

Speaker: Cheryl Bridges Johns

For more information:

<http://www.emu.edu/seminary/slt/>

Know Jesus

“Know Jesus”, a bi-annual 24 hour Junior High gathering, is coming to the Hesston College campus on **January 29-30, 2011**. Know Jesus carries a strong Anabaptist theme with an inspirational speaker, a rocking worship band and an extravagant version of the Anabaptist Game. The Anabaptist Game, organized by Michele Hershberger and approximately 100 volunteers, includes participatory dramatization of early martyrs, safe houses, risky adult baptisms, narrow escapes, capture, trial, imprisonment and the work of the Holy Spirit. Know Jesus is designed to bring our Anabaptist history to life and make powerful connections to our calling to follow and know Jesus today.

See www.mennowdc.org, Coming Events for registration information. Registration is a package deal including lodging, food, and t-shirt!

Ignite

IGNITE! Survivor Edition is coming to South Hutchinson Mennonite Church **March 6, 2011**. IGNITE! is an annual event to resource, inspire and celebrate the work of youth ministers, workers and sponsors. IGNITE! includes workshops, worship, networking and a banquet meal. The theme revolves around how to survive and thrive in youth ministry in terms of longevity, youth culture, church relations, curriculum, event planning and more! More information to come. Questions? Contact Doug Krehbiel at WDC.

Music Lending Library Upload!

Thanks to the hard work of Doris Schmidt, North Newton and Phyllis Regier, WDC staff, we have a fully updated and enlarged Music Lending Library Catalog featuring over 2500 items! Now you can search this massive database by clicking on: Voicing, Title, Composer, Season or Junior Choir. You may discover that our expanded holdings are due to our capacity for networking:

four WDC churches have included their holding in the catalog and are ready to receive your requests. See it all at: www.mennowdc.org/MusicLibrary.html

Night in the Library!

The winter months would be an excellent time to schedule a Night at the Library. Discover a world (ok, 12,000) of print, music and DVD resources purchased especially for you and your church. Bring your small group, specialty group (men, women, family, youth) or design a coffee time for you and your best nine friends. We have room for reading, scavenger hunts, potluck or pizza and more. Find out what the WDC Resource Library can do for you! Contact Marlene Bogard, Minister of Christian Nurture to make a date!

Webinars feature AMBS presidents, current and past

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary announces upcoming online seminars, featuring Sara Wenger Shenk, new president; and Nelson Kraybill, past president. These webinars require only a reliable high speed internet connection and a land-line telephone.

No more church as usual! No! More church as usual: Young adults and the church - Sara Wenger Shenk, president, AMBS - November 18, 2:00–3:15 p.m. EST

Apocalypse and allegiance: Worship, politics and devotion in the book of Revelation - J. Nelson Kraybill, pastor, Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.; past president, AMBS - December 2, 2:00–3:30 p.m. EST

The full list of webinars includes many that will be of interest to a wide variety of people: <http://www.ambs.edu/webinars>

Volunteer!

...for Mennonite Church USA! Volunteers with general carpentry skills are needed to help with the construction of the new Mennonite Church USA offices building project located in Elkhart, Indiana adjacent to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Check out the construction schedule and apply online at:

www.mennoniteusa.org/JoiningTogether/.

Questions? Email volunteer@mennonites.org or call toll-free 866-866-2872, ext. 23043.

Closed

The WDC office will be closed **November 25 and 26** for Thanksgiving.

Western District Conference coming events

Jan. 21, 2011 - Pastors Resourcing Day
Jan. 22, 2011 - Choral Festival, Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS
Jan. 21-23, 2011 - Jr. High Snow Camp, Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, CO
Jan. 29-30, 2011 – Know Jesus, Hesston College, Hesston, KS
Feb. 18-20, 2011 - Sr. High Snow Camp I, Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, CO
March 6, 2011 – Ignite, South Hutchinson Mennonite Church, KS
March 18-20, 2011 - Sr. High Snow Camp II, Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, CO
May 1, 2011 – Camp Mennoscah Camp Sing, Bethel College Memorial Hall, North Newton, KS
July 29-30, 2011 – Annual Assembly, North Newton, KS

Conference Ministers' schedules

Nov. 1-3 - Mennonite Publishing Network Consultation, Camp Amigo (MB)
Nov. 4 - 1-70 Pastor Peer Group (CR)
Nov. 6 - Resource Commission (MB)
Nov. 7 - Amanda Rempel installation, Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, KS (CR)
Nov. 8 - Beatrice Mennonite Church (CR)
Nov. 9 - Resource Round-up at Youth Pastors Lunch (MB)
Nov. 14 - Hope Greiser Graber licensing and installation, Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS (CR)
Nov. 15 - Youth Ministry class (CR)
Nov. 16 - Mennonite leaders gathering; Stewardship Commission (CR)
Nov. 18 - Missional Pastor Peer Group (CR)
Nov. 21 - John & Marcia Yoder Schrock farewell, West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS (CR)
Nov. 23 - Inman (KS) Mennonite Church (CR) (Marlene Bogard-MB; Gilberto Flores-GF; CR-Clarence Rempel)

WDC MEMO is published for WDC pastors and committee members. These announcements may be used in bulletins and newsletters, and forwarded to leaders in your congregations.

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