

WESTERN DISTRICT CONFERENCE E-MEMO

May 10, 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 (Publications)
(This replaces the monthly WDC Memo.)*

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Pastoral Openings

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

Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, KS - Youth Pastor (full-time)

Pastoral News/Transitions

Gail Cross ended as Interim Pastor at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice, NE on April 24.

Cleo Koop completes his ministry at First Mennonite Church, Halstead, KS on May 31. He will begin on June 15 as Pastor at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, KS.

Lee Lever has accepted a call to Pastor at Austin (TX) Mennonite Church, beginning June 1.

John Otto will serve as Supply Pastor in June and July at First Mennonite Church, Halstead, KS. Randy Smith begins as Transition Pastor on July 24 for approximately one year.

John Regier will begin as Pastor at Beatrice Mennonite Church on August 1. Bill Damberg will conclude there as Interim Pastor on June 5.

Willard Schrag, retired pastor, age 93, died April 23 in Moundridge, KS. He was ordained in 1956 and served numerous WDC churches, feeling a call to pastor small rural Mennonite churches. His wife, Ruth, survives.

Marcia Yoder-Schrock has accepted a call to pastor at Zion Mennonite Church, Donnellson, Iowa.

WDC Announcements

1. Camp Swimming Pool –Have you been checking out the progress of the new pool at Camp Mennoscah on FaceBook? The construction continues and so do the construction costs. We have raised over \$163,000 but still need \$137,000 more to cover the cost of the pool. So far over 248 families/individuals and 20 churches have given to the pool project. Now we need your help to complete the project. Please make your checks out to Western District Conference, memo-line “Camp Pool”, and send to WDC, PO Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117 or donate on-line at mennowdc.org, click on the Camp Mennoscah tab.
2. Almost there! Camp Mennoscah’s summer youth camps start in only 1 month. Our new pool is on track to be finished on time (weather pending). We’re still eagerly checking the mail for more registrations (because we want to share camp with everyone). Most of our weeks have cooks (but we still need a few more). It’s a regular extravaganza of almos. Want to be part of the fun? Contact us at campmno@mennowdc.org or 620-297-3290 for more information.
3. June 5, Day of Celebration! Camp Mennoscah will be celebrating TWO great things on at 3:30 pm —Torrey Ball’s many years as our maintenance coordinator and the new pool! Grab your swimsuit and sunscreen and come to Camp Mennoscah for some fun times! (If the weather doesn’t cooperate and the pool isn’t ready for swimming, we’ll cut a ribbon—feel free to still wear your swimsuit.)
4. Campbell's labels and Boxtops for Education can be left at the WDC office in North Newton, or Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston, by May 20, for delivery to Hopi Mission School the following week.
5. “Make No Excuses - Simply Come to the Banquet” is the theme for the annual WDC Assembly to be held on July 29-30 at Bethel College and Bethel College Mennonite Church. Make plans to attend these days of celebration, worship, learning and fellowship!
6. All pastors, active or retired, are invited to a brown bag lunch with Willard Swartley on Wednesday, May 25, from 11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston, KS. He will share insights from the draft of the new Believers Church Bible Commentary on the Gospel of John.

Announcements – Mennonite Church USA

1. Pastors are invited for an exciting new offering at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center in partnership with Kairos: School of Spiritual Formation. On June 6-8, we will host “Cultivating Attentiveness”, a three-day contemplative retreat designed especially for pastors. It is conveniently scheduled Monday-Wednesday and priced affordably to encourage pastors to take the time for self-care, reflection and spiritual nourishment.

Pastors and elders can learn more about the program at Laurelville.org/pastorsretreat or by calling 800.839.1021.

2. The Great Whitewater Connection (July 9-11 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center)—Sr. high youth can extend their Mennonite Church USA convention experience during this three-day retreat, featuring whitewater rafting, teambuilding, swimming, worship and more. For just \$50/person, this is a fun, affordable postlude to Pittsburgh 2011 and a great opportunity for youth to deepen their faith and strengthen friendships with others. Learn more at Laurelville.org/whitewater or by calling 800.839.1021.

3. Friendship Week (July 20-24, 2011 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center)—Find a safe, supportive environment during this retreat for families, friends and persons with disabilities. You'll enjoy a well-planned schedule marked by respite care, inclusive worship, games and activities. New families receive 20% off the cost of registration. Register and learn more at Laurelville.org/friendshipweek or by calling 800.839.1021.

4. Values-based Leadership Program (Session I: September 20-22 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center)—Gain a fresh perspective on leadership during this two-session training. You'll develop a clearer understanding of your strengths and style as a leader and learn how to empower others in a way that is grounded in Anabaptist values. This program is designed for congregational leaders, business owners, non-profit executives, educators and administrators. Learn more at VBLP.org or by calling 800.839.1021.

5. Mennonite Education Agency (MEA) and Mennonite Schools Council (MSC) are pleased to sponsor a series of interactive webinars on themes from the recently published book, *Teaching that Transforms: Why Anabaptist-Mennonite Education Matters* (January 2011, Herald Press). The author John D. Roth, Goshen College history professor, invites "an open, vigorous and honest conversation about the Anabaptist-Mennonite witness in North America" in his book and during the upcoming webinars.

The series of three webinars will take place on Tuesdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m. (Eastern Time), beginning May 24. There is no cost to participate. Everyone is welcome although registration is required five days before the day of the webinar. Go to www.MennoniteEducation.org/WEBINAR to register for the series or for particular webinars.

During the first webinar, "Framing the challenges: The currents in which we are swimming," Roth will speak about the public debate surrounding education, provide very brief histories of Western education and Mennonite education, and then focus on the variety of challenges faced by Mennonite educational institutions. The May 31 webinar, "Addressing the challenges: Theological resources," will focus on the Mennonite/Anabaptist identity and the significance of the Incarnation for Mennonites/Anabaptists. Roth will conclude by sharing his hopes for the future of Mennonite education during the final June 7 webinar, "Leading with courage."

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